ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for autopolling physical layer (PHY) devices in a network is controlled by information contained in a plurality of poll registers. A user independently defines the PHY addresses and register numbers for a plurality of external PHY registers and provides these to the poll registers. In each poll register, an enable bit is provided for each of

5   the selected PHY registers. When a host CPU sets one of the enable bits, the poll logic reads the corresponding PHY register and stores the result in a corresponding poll data register. One poll data register is provided for each poll register. Thereafter, at each polling interval, the poll logic compares the current contents of the selected PHY register with the contents of the corresponding poll data register. If a change is detected, an interrupt is set in an interrupt

10   register, which causes an interrupt to the host CPU.